

Devices helping to make Utah lakes safer

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By KEVIN NIENDORF
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PROVO — Preliminary indications are that both boaters and Utah State Park rangers think two devices now being used at Utah's water parks will help reduce the number of intoxicated boaters as well as noise pollution.

The devices include a preliminary breath tester (PBT) and sound level meters. Training was held in May and rangers have been using them on a trial basis since.

"It's been a tremendous help," said Chris Miller, park ranger at Utah Lake State Park, of the PBT use. "It's like the icing on the cake."

Miller said before he ever uses a PBT, he's done a variety of sobriety tests on possible intoxicated boat drivers. A PBT gives an immediate breath test result (down to the hundredths) which, according to Miller, results in "no guess work."

Like any other peace officer such as the Utah Highway Patrol or a sheriff's deputy, park rangers can issue citations of public intoxication or other alcohol-related offenses. Boating under the influence is a Class A misdemeanor punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000 and a jail term of up to six months.

Miller said reaction from the public has not been negative concerning the PBT. He's used his approximately 20 times since May.

"I just ask politely if they'll submit to the test," said Miller. "They've pretty much already been through the field sobriety tests."

Ted Woolley, boating coordinator for the state parks, said the PBTs are being used on 15 of Utah's most popular boating waters. Locally, those include Utah



Herald Photo/Jason Olson

Utah Parks and Recreation ranger Kevin Lazenby demonstrates the use of a breathalyzer tester on fellow employee Shae Zufelt.

Lake, Deer Creek Reservoir and Yuba Lake.

One of the dangers, said Woolley, of boating and alcohol are the "natural stressors," such as waves and sun, which compounds the ef-

fects of alcohol.

The other device, a portable sound level meter, is helping rangers keep Utah's waterways quieter. Miller said he's used them to issue warnings on "about a half

dozen" boaters since May.

The warning is simple. If the meter reads more than 90 decibels, motorists will be issued a citation and the boat must leave the water until it is brought into compliance.

Beginning Jan. 1, 1993, the decibel level may not exceed 88. Furthermore, boats passing shorelines cannot emit a decibel level of over 75.

Utahns become pawns in fight over water

By Dean R. Kleckner

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MY VIEW

Unbeknownst to many people, Utah residents have become pawns in a battle in Congress over the future of California's largest water system, the Central Valley Project.

Legislation is pending in Congress that would authorize construction or completion of water reclamation projects, including completion of the Central Utah Project. Like the California version, which was completed nearly 15 years ago, the Central Utah Project, when finished, will capture and supply water to farms, cities and industry throughout the state.

However, completion of the Central Utah Project and its tangible economic benefits to the people of Utah are being held hostage and are ultimately threatened by proponents of radical change to California's Central Valley Project (CVP).

The chief sponsor, Rep. George Miller, is holding the Central Utah Project hostage by making approval of drastic and economically damaging alteration of California's CVP a prerequisite for the legislation.

The California Democrat is supported by New Jersey Sen. Bill Bradley, who has written that green lawns in big cities are more important than agriculture and the rural communities it supports through revenues and jobs.

Miller is chairman of the powerful House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, which oversees water reclamation projects.

Using his position as chairman, Miller attached the House version of CVP reform to HR429, an omnibus bill affecting much-needed water projects in several Western states, including Utah.

Because a different proposal for CVP reform passed the Senate, the issue is now before a House/Senate Conference Committee, whose members include Utah Rep. James Hansen.

Miller placed his House reform as part of the larger reclamation package because he believes congressmen and senators in the West will find it difficult to oppose his radical change to the CVP when critical projects in their states stand in the balance.

While the other bills in HR 429 deal with how to construct and manage new water reclamation facilities,

the nature of legislation regarding the CVP is markedly different and should stand on its own.

Central to the discussion is the fundamental operation of the CVP and how much water will be allocated for farmers, cities, industry and the environment. The proposal advocated by Miller and Bradley would take critical water away from current agricultural users.

Since no new CVP water facilities would be established, dedicating water for new purposes can only come from denying water to current users. In the Miller plan, agriculture is the big loser.

Even if Miller and Bradley get enough members of the House/Senate Conference Committee to back drastic CVP reform, HR429 and the Central Utah Project may fall victim.

Miller and Bradley are playing a game of political chicken to force unacceptable CVP reform onto the president's desk in the hope that election-year pressures result in his agreeing to their demands.

By holding the other projects hostage to coerce a favorable vote on CVP reform, Miller and Bradley reveal their disdain for rural communities and farming.

Miller's legislation, if passed, would decimate the economy in his own state by reallocating up to 2 million acre-feet of CVP water away from traditional agriculture, urban and industrial uses.

Central Valley residents have nicknamed Miller's latest proposal the "Central Valley Unemployment Act." Economists in California have estimated drastic reallocation of water could idle 1 million acres of farmland and cost the state billions of dollars in lost economic activity, not to mention nearly 100,000 jobs.

By stalling the other projects for his own political gain, Miller is showing a cavalier disregard for the economic benefits the other Western states, including Utah, will derive from completion of much-needed systems that will ultimately provide a reliable and affordable water supplies.

For the benefit of all residents in states affected by reclamation legislation, the House/Senate conferees, including Hansen, should reject Miller's latest House proposal and adopt workable and sensible legislation that will make it past the president's desk.

By doing so, the conferees will expedite completion of their own worthwhile projects.

(Dean R. Kleckner is national president of the American Farm Bureau Federation in Washington, D.C.)

Congress Passes CUP Bill, But President's Signature Not a Sure Thing 10-14-92

Although a complicated water bill that includes the Central Utah Project Completion Act was approved by a wide margin in Congress last week, Washington observers have serious doubts about whether or not President George Bush will sign the bill into law.

The president doesn't object to the \$922 million the bill appropriates for completing the CUP, including completion of the Jordanella Dam, mitigation projects associated with it, and conservation measures that are to be implemented over the next five years.

But he does object to provisions in the bill that reallocate some of California's water from agriculture

to wildlife and municipal uses.

But the bill only authorizes funding for the CUP. It does not appropriate the money. Each year the Utah delegation will have to make sure the funds are appropriated and included in the federal budget until the project is finished. Democratic Rep. Bill Orton warns that before the CUP is completed, Utahns will have to come up with about \$180 million in matching funds, which could be an even bigger battle than getting the bill approved and signed.

The bill also takes the responsibility for finishing the CUP from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and turns it over to the Central Utah Water Conservancy District.